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out of it possibly a fair reading knowledge gained at a disproportionately great expense in time and energy. Each lesson is a huge agglomeration of copious rules and tabulated lists, each exercise is preceded by a good-sized dictionary instalment, presents a mass of composition matter more or less to the purpose, and is followed by a bewildering chapter on *conversación*. A fair representative sample of the methods of the volume is shown by Lesson XL, on the conjunctions (p. 254). Here we are edified by a register of nine different assortments, viz., *copulative, disjunctive, adversative, comparative, illative, continuative, conditional, causal*, and, at last, *final*, the meeting of which one experiences with a sigh of relief—which speedily vanishes when immediately afterward our attention is called to a “List of the Most Common Conjunctions in Alphabetical Order.” We counted nearly 150 of these—there may have been some missed—and we came out of the operation with a heightened feeling of respect for this prolific and potent family. But we did not have the courage to tackle the accompanying exercise in which this awesome batallion was expected to give a drill.

This form of grammatical composition may seem appropriate to the Germanic spirit of *thoroughness*, but to the more exigent Americans it would seem dull and depressing, and even unintelligent. We can hardly imagine such a work having much vogue among us as a practical manual of instruction. The method is anything but economical or businesslike. Nor does it preclude infelicities of arrangement, as where, in the account of tenses (pp. 278–84), no mention is made of that characteristic Romance tense construction whereby a past action continuing into the present is expressed by the latter tense (*e. g.*, “I have been here a week”). But this principle, worthy of a special paragraph of explanation and examples, is mentioned in a couple of lines buried in a footnote to p. 68. Nor is precision of statement always to be expected, as where, in the chapter on pronunciation, we are told that Spanish vowels must be pronounced “very clearly,” after which follows a distinction between “pure and clear,” on the one hand, and, on the other, “broad” (*i. e.*, not “clear?”); or when we are told that *i* sounds like *i* in “sink,” “ink,” “film,” which is rather the way it does *not* sound. This is the case of the half-loaf of knowledge which rapidly disappears to the vanishing point.

But the volume is not without instructive features; *e. g.*, as when we are told in a sentence of the exercise to Lesson XXV (p. 153), “*el medio de hacerse rico no es el de escribir una gramática; y si no lo queréis creer, ¡preguntádselo al editor!*” We fear that the intrinsic merits of the present work will only too well confirm the truthfulness of this statement.

*First Spanish Book and Reader.* By W. F. GIESE. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1902. Pp. 362 (grammar and composition, pp. 189; reader and vocabulary, pp. 193–357).

THIS is a volume in the Appletons' “Twentieth Century Text-Books,” of the Spanish department of which Professor Giese is the editor. The present work purports to be a brief grammar and reader combined in one volume, the originality of the undertaking being, as the author claims, “its attempt at fusing the two and at presenting grammar through reading,” or, in other words, that the author's “rather boldly minimized epitome of grammatical theory” is dispersed through a large body of reading matter, which is made the basis of imitation and application in the acquisition of the language. There is the usual introduction dealing with the language

sounds and signs. The so-called grammar proper is divided into two parts, comprising thirty "lessons." The leading features of each lesson are an instalment of grammar summarizing some topic—beginning with articles and continuing in the usual sequence—followed by several exercises in which a simple prose extract is dished up in various forms and inversions for easy reading, composition, and conversation. These prose selections are usually well made up, of suitable grade for the purpose, and skilfully combined with a judicious introduction of graded vocabulary. Part I deals with "Accidence" or grammatical rudiments. Part II concerns itself specially with irregular verbs. The "Reader" (85 pages) is composed of extracts (*trozos escogidos*) from *Gil Blas*, a selection from the *cuentos* of Alarcón, and several anecdotal passages. This last part has no particular originality, and might be supplied equally well by any good prose text.

The book is one of the numerous works for language study that attempt to minimize the prescription of grammar by administering it in small doses and disguising its flavor, as a skilful physician does with his drugs, or as the fond mother is said to do sometimes in giving physic to her precious one by covering it up (the physic, not the latter) in syrup or preserves. The coddling, spoon-feeding process has its warm advocates who may profit therefrom in the culture of their tender wards. But we do not mean to say that the present volume is designed primarily for such an effeminate class of youthful patrons. It is a good work of its kind and shows a compiler of competence for his subject. Yet we doubt whether the system on which it is based can be *safe* in all respects, save when employed by a thoroughly competent director—as the author himself—prepared on his own part to co-operate with it effectively by abundance of scholarship and experience. Without these the linguistic results and the mental training are in danger of being anæmic rather than robust. For the foundation or outline of grammatical knowledge it offers—and the way it is offered—cannot be final for those who aim at acquiring any degree of thoroughness in their conscious hold on the language. It embodies and illustrates one highly important principle—that of recognizing early reading and furnishing abundant drill therein.

*Spanish and English Conversation.* First and Second Part. By AIDA E. PINNEY. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1902. 2 vols. Pp. 107 and 111.

THE nature of this work is indicated by its title and the prefatory statement that "no attempt has been made to teach the grammar except by example." We are further encouraged by the assurance that by the method employed "the pupil will without conscious effort acquire a grammatical as well as an idiomatic use of the language." Each volume (or book) has twenty "lessons," in the form of a body of Spanish sentences grouped on as many pages and supplemented, on the opposite pages, by an equal number of "verb drills," each based on the corresponding lesson. There follows a body of prose selections for more connected readings. The whole of this matter, including the preface, is then translated in regular sequence and appended to the foregoing as the second half of the volume, which thus serves as a key to the first half. The second volume (or book) pursues the same method and is characterized by the same features, save that it has the further advantage of what the author announces as "a regular progressive scale upward, so that each conversation lesson may prove a stepping-stone to added knowledge of and familiarity with the tongue desired."